

2-2-2016

Black Heritage Stamp Series: Richard Allen

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Footer logo

Issue Date

February 2, 2016

First Day City

Philadelphia, PA

DesignerGreg Breeding
Charlottesville, VA**Art Director**

Greg Breeding

Typographer

Greg Breeding

Modeler

Joseph Sheeran

Manufacturing Process

Offset/Microprint

PrinterAshton Potter (USA)
Ltd. (APU)**Engraver**

N/A

ColorsGreen (PMS 556C),
Cyan, Magenta,
Yellow, Black**Image Area (w x h)**0.84 x 1.42 in.
21.34 x 36.07 mm**Format**

Pane of 20 (1 design)

Plate Numbers"P" followed by five
single digits**Marginal Markings**Header:
"BLACK HERITAGE"
"Celebrating Richard
Allen" "39TH IN A
SERIES" • © 2015
USPS, plate numbers,
USPS logo, plate
position diagram,
barcode, descriptive
text, promotional text**Richard Allen**

When Richard Allen (1760–1831) lamented the bitterness of slavery, he spoke from experience—but this remarkably resolute and industrious man purchased his own freedom in his twenties and became one of the most important African-American leaders of his era.

After making a name for himself as a traveling minister throughout the Mid-Atlantic, Allen was asked to preach to his fellow African Americans at a Methodist church in Philadelphia. He quickly rose to prominence as a civic leader, co-founding an organization to help African-American neighbors in need, rallying black Philadelphians to serve as aid workers during a yellow fever epidemic, and preparing the black community to defend the city during the War of 1812.

Eager to establish an independent African-American church, Allen purchased an old blacksmith's shop and moved it to land he owned at Sixth and Lombard Streets. Bethel Church was dedicated in 1794 and soon attracted several hundred members, but Allen spent years in conflict with white church leaders who sought to assert their control. At one point, they tried to sell the building out from under him—but as a successful businessman, Allen was able to buy it back at auction. After a campaign that included sit-ins by African Americans and a judgment by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, the congregation secured its independence. In 1816, Allen summoned other black Methodist leaders to Philadelphia, where together they founded the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, electing and consecrating Allen as its first bishop.

Today, Mother Bethel AME Church stands on the site where Allen converted that old blacksmith's shop more than two centuries ago, and the denomination he founded now boasts more than 2.5 million members. His life—a legacy of determination, uplift, charity, and faith—remains an inspiration to all Americans.



first day of issue



BLACK HERITAGE

RICHARD ALLEN

February 2, 2016
Philadelphia, PA 19104

The Library Company of Philadelphia

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UNITED STATES
POSTAL SERVICE®

Rodney Lawrence Hurst Sr. Papers
Thomas G Carpenter Library
Special Collections

Richard Allen

THE 39TH STAMP IN THE Black Heritage series commemorates preacher, activist, and civic leader Richard Allen (1760–1831), whose remarkable life and work resonate profoundly in American history.

After purchasing his own freedom from slavery and making a name for himself as a traveling minister throughout the Mid-Atlantic, Allen was asked to preach to his fellow African Americans at a Methodist church in Philadelphia. He quickly rose to prominence as a civic leader, co-founding an organization to help African-American neighbors in need, rallying black Philadelphians to serve as aid workers during a yellow fever epidemic, and preparing the black community to defend the city during the War of 1812.

Eager to establish an independent African-American church, Allen purchased an old blacksmith's shop and moved it to land he owned at Sixth and Lombard Streets. Bethel Church was dedicated in 1794 and soon attracted several hundred members, but Allen spent years in conflict with white church

leaders who sought to assert their control. After a campaign that included sit-ins by African Americans and a judgment by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, the congregation secured its independence. In 1816, Allen summoned other black Methodist leaders to Philadelphia, where together they founded the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, electing and consecrating Allen as its first bishop.

With more than 2.5 million members, the AME Church remains a truly indispensable institution in African-American life—while its founder's resilience is a legacy for all Americans to honor and admire.



Richard Allen

background and intaglio: The Library Company of Philadelphia

Stamps printed by Ashton Potter (USA) Ltd. (APU)/No. 960 in a series/February 2, 2016/Printed in U.S.A./© 2016 United States Postal Service

BLACK HERITAGE

Celebrating Richard Allen



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Richard Allen

COMMEMORATIVE
FOREVER® STAMP

FIRST-DAY-OF-ISSUE STAMP DEDICATION CEREMONY

Tuesday, February 2, 2016
Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church
419 South 6th Street ♦ Philadelphia, PA 19147



INTRODUCTION

Reverend Mark K. Tyler, Ph.D.
52nd Pastor, Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church

MASTER OF CEREMONIES

Vernon E. Jordan, Jr.
*Sr. Managing Director — Lazard
Lifelong Member of A.M.E. Church*

PRESENTATION OF COLORS

**3rd Regiment, Infantry, U.S. Colored
Troops**

NATIONAL ANTHEM

J'nai Bridges
Mezzo Soprano

LIFT EVERY VOICE AND SING

Regina Jackson

INVOCATION

Bishop Carolyn Tyler Guidry, Retired

WELCOME

Bishop Gregory G.M. Ingram
*Presiding Prelate of the First Episcopal
District A.M.E. Church*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Jacquelyn Dupont-Walker
*Director, Social Action Commission,
A.M.E. Church*

OFFICIAL STAMP DEDICATION

Dr. Joshua D. Colin
*Vice President, Area Operations — Eastern
Area, United States Postal Service*

MUSICAL TRIBUTE

United States Postal Service Choir

REMARKS

Reverend Teresa Fry Brown, Ph.D.
*Historiographer/Executive Director
Department of Research & Scholarship
A.M.E. Church*

GREETINGS

The Honorable Jim Kenney
Mayor, City of Philadelphia

Richard Lawrence
Richard Allen Descendant

Bishop John R. Bryant
Senior Bishop, A.M.E. Church

CLOSING REMARKS

Bishop Reginald T. Jackson
*Chair, Social Action Commission,
A.M.E. Church*

MUSICAL TRIBUTE

J'nai Bridges
Mezzo Soprano

BENEDICTION

Bishop Jeffery Leath
*13th Episcopal District,
A.M.E. Church*

Mention USPS® online using
#HeritageStamps or #RichardAllenForever,
so we can share your thoughts.

Richard Allen

When Richard Allen (1760–1831) lamented the bitterness of slavery, he spoke from experience, but this resolute and industrious man purchased his own freedom in his twenties and became one of the most important African-American leaders of his era. Designed by art director Greg Breeding, this 39th stamp in the Black Heritage series features a detail from a 19th-century print and celebrates Allen's accomplishments as a preacher, activist and civic leader.

After making a name for himself as a traveling minister throughout the mid-Atlantic, Allen was asked to preach to his fellow African Americans at a Methodist church in Philadelphia. He quickly rose to prominence, co-founding an organization to help African-American neighbors in need, rallying black Philadelphians to serve as aid workers during a yellow fever epidemic and preparing the black community to defend the city during the War of 1812.

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Richard Allen

COMMEMORATIVE
FOREVER® STAMP

First-Day-of-Issue

Stamp Dedication Ceremony

Tuesday, February 2, 2016

Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church

419 South 6th Street

Philadelphia, PA 19147



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FIRST-DAY-OF-ISSUE
CEREMONY
PROGRAM



Celebrate the Art of Stamps



first day of issue

BLACK HERITAGE



RICHARD
ALLEN February 2, 2016
Philadelphia, PA 19104

Rodney Lawrence Hurst
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